

BRISE DU SOIR.

[We eagerly reproduce the following translation of a famous romance from our contemporary the *Gazette*. The translator is L. A. C., of Brockville, Ont., and must be complimented on his rare success. Not only has he retained almost the literal meaning of the original, but has so managed the rhythm that the music suits his words fully as well, and as easily, as it does the French original. To enable our readers to judge for themselves, we append the French words. We trust we shall hear from L. A. C. again.—Ed. C. I. N.]

SWEET WIND OF EVE!

Sweet wind of eve! around my window playing,
With blue forget-me-nots and roses crimson blown,
Oh, fragrant flitting breeze! perchance amid thy stray-
ing
Thou'lt wander where my dreams, my fonder thoughts
are flown!

Sweet wind of eve! oh may thy soft caresses,
The purest sighs of love still breathe around her there,
On her fair neck of snow unroll her shining tresses,
And happy, faint and die, amid her golden hair.

Sweet wind of eve! oh whisper to her sleeping,
In murr'ing music low, thy dreamy melody,
While I, in tears and prayers, my lonely vigil keeping,
In darkness kneel, and sing of her so far from me.

Brockville, Ont.

L. A. C.

BRISE DU SOIR!

Brise du soir! qui viens sur ma fenêtre
Berce mes rêveries et mes rosières en fleur.
Brise errante du soir! tu passeras peut-être
Où vont tous mes soupirs, les rêves de mon cœur.

Brise du soir! que ta plus douce haleine,
Ton souffle le plus pur et le plus amoureux,
S'épouse à soulever et dérouler avec peine,
Sur son cou libre et nu, l'or de ses blonds cheveux.

Brise du soir! murmure à son oreille,
Pour l'endormir, tes bruits, tes concerts les plus doux,
Tandis que dans les pleurs, en priant, moi je veille,
Et chante dans la nuit, seul, loin d'elle à genoux.

WAS IT LOVE, OR HATRED?

I had seen something of certain parts of the State, but was a fresh arrival in the little community of Jocyltown and knew very few of the inhabitants well before an affair occurred which placed me at once on the footing of the oldest citizen. The hotel was the only brick building in the place—a new settlement on the plains which has since become a thriving centre of two railways, and, in the hotel, all that was of brick was the front. Compared to that of the log-house opposite, it was imposing, for there, Jocyl, the oldest inhabitant, had passed a lonely existence before he laid out his farm in building lots, and started the new town by the simple expedient of running up the hotel. Next door to the hotel, on either side, were the two principal stores of Jocyltown, built of pine and clap-boarded, and across the way, close to the log-house with its lean-to addition, labourers were digging the foundations of a Methodist church. The main hotel was not so high in the eaves as the brick front, but it spread over a good deal of ground, and an extension had been run to the rear with two elbows, so as to bring the rear back again to the line of the street beyond one of the stores. This addition had a door marked "Ladies' Entrance," and Jocyltown was not long in finding out that it had been well named, for at least one lady, and a very pretty one too, was in the habit of coming in and out that way. Well, in this rear extension the sensation had its start, for a young married woman had been found one morning severely stabbed, while her husband had left town suddenly on a horse belonging to the hotel-keeper. When discovered she could not speak, but she made no signs of denial when asked if her husband had stabbed her. This was enough for the inhabitants of Jocyltown. The lady had been seen and admired for her beauty; of the husband little was known, save that he never stood treat at the bar and seemed a moping sort of fellow who kept aloof from folks, and put on airs of superior learning. At the store, where he was acting as chief clerk, he served his customers with as few words as they would allow. He had made a horrible assault with intent to kill, and probably had succeeded in his purpose. The men who met together at the bar were convinced of the fact, and decided that parties should start at once in search of the offender.

"It ain't actually necessary to bring him in," said the leader in this decision, as he separated with his party toward the north; "what is most to be looked after is, that he don't get further and try it on again! He's a horse-thief, anyhow."

With these indefinite instructions clearly enough understood, we turned westward and struck out into the prairie.

I had two reasons for accompanying this party. One was, that in this direction I knew the land pretty well, and might very likely come across persons with whom I was acquainted; another was to verify a theory I had picked up from somebody. I had been told that fugitives, unless they have some definite plan of flight, are more apt to run to the west than to any other point of the compass. From the general aspect of the case, I was pretty sure that the crime was a hasty one, and the criminal a man without a fixed purpose. The road we followed was so full of tracks that nothing could be done in the way of tracing the criminal by signs. Our only plan was to follow the old-established trail until we met some one who might have seen the culprit. We had ridden about twelve miles before a turn

occurred in the road. At a point where the plain rose to a ridge before flowing up toward a hilly country with some timber beyond, it turned abruptly to the south. Just here my theory stood me in good stead, for I watched the edge of the trail sharply as we made the bend, and there, sure enough, were fresh tracks of a horse between the thin wiry grass, and pointing to the westward. Without a word of comment my companions turned their horses, and we all rode a little way at a trot. Presently I began to look about me and recognized the locality.

"We have him," said I. "He has put up at Clark's, over on the oak barrens."

At this name my companions looked grave, but then, justice must be done, and they had the orders of the community.

"How many miles?" said one.

"Six, or seven."

"Humph! Sandy road, too, most of it, I'll be bound. If we rest the horses now, we can fetch it by sunset."

It was after sundown when we arrived, owing chiefly to my uncertainty of the road. However, as long as there was light, we were certainly on the right track, supposing always that the hoof-marks we were following did not belong to some one else. Later on it was needless to see them, because there was no house except Clark's in the neighbourhood. I was a little nervous at what our reception might be. Clark was not the man to allow a lot of fellows to surround his house after dark without a protest that might send more than one saddle home empty. I suggested that one should ride ahead and knock Clark up, while the others should follow immediately on the sound of parleying.

It was black as pitch as I rode up to the frame dwelling house. It had been built in a city many hundred miles away, and ox-carted across rivers and prairies. In that rough piece of country it looked by daylight as if it had dropped from some city which had taken to traveling through the air; at night a stranger coming upon it would not have believed a modern frame house possible in such a spot.

"What the—do you want, anyhow?" cried Clark from an upper window, after a prolonged siege of knocking. Knowing that he must have a rifle in one hand and a pistol in the other, I hastened to name myself, and begged him to come down and let me in. This he proceeded to do with a much better grace than his first words might have led one to suspect; for, with Clark, oaths were of little more account than extra breaths; they served as convenient points in his discourse for putting on the stress of voice. Emphasis is a difficult matter to arrange for the best of us; but Clark's arrangement was simplicity itself, for he used imprecations merely as stepping-stones down the shallow river of his discourse.

"There's a man put up here that we are after," said I. "He's cut his wife pretty badly down at the hotel in Jocyltown, and gone away on old Jocyl's mare. We want you to give him up."

"Now, hold on," said Clark, stepping back. "You're my friend, and I calculate you're fair, but who the— is 'we'?" There is a man put up here, I won't deny; but I don't give no man away; I want you to understand that."

"Why, you don't want to protect a murderer, do you?" said I.

"How do I know he's a murderer? You say so, and I won't give you the lie. But I don't really know anything about it. The man's safe in my house, and while he's there, he's safe."

While we parleyed, my companions had put the horses in the barn, and now came up. The elder moved directly behind Clark into the door.

"Hey there!—you, who asked you in there?" cried Clark, cocking his pistol and leveling it. There was just light enough from a candle in the passage to take good and infallible aim.

"For heaven's sake, Clark," said I, catching his arm, "we are not on the fight."

"Yes, we are on the fight," said Brown, the man who had stepped in, drawing his pistol with a quick motion. "I am, if my power is resisted. I'm the law, I am. See here."

With the other hand, and still keeping his pistol on Clark, he pushed the lapel of his coat aside and showed the metal badge of a sheriff. Clark's arm dropped at once, and we all went into the house.

"Hang me if you'd have got in to-day, sheriff or no sheriff," said Clark discontentedly. "What the—! I thought you was alone."

We had entered the sitting-room, and while I busied myself with lighting a lamp and stirring up the fire in a stove at one end of the room, Clark and my two companions roused up the offender. Presently all four made their appearance. My companions were solemn; Clark was surly and fretful, while the prisoner was pale and trembling.

"Sit down by the fire and tell us all about it," said Clark roughly, but with kindness, pushing up a seat and pouring him out some whiskey in a tea-cup. The whiskey seemed to do the prisoner good, or else the heat of the stove allayed his fit of trembling. His dull look of misery gave way to more intelligence as he gazed from one face to another. Somehow he was not a man you could be hard on.

"Is—is she dead?" he finally managed to stutter, looking wistfully around.

"Not yet," said Brown, the deputy-sheriff, sternly.

"Ah!" shuddered the man, "I hope she won't. I hope she won't. I have no hard feelings against her—none at all."

"Perhaps it's the other way," suggested Ran-

dall, taking a piece of navy plug out of his waistcoat pocket, and with his penknife shaving off a piece of a shape and size peculiar to himself. He offered the black cake of tobacco to the prisoner as a kind of mute testimony that his words were not meant to be offensive, but the latter shook his head sadly. We had all drawn up around the stove, and Clark brought out a demijohn of the right stuff, and two or three thick glasses, such as they use in bar-rooms. We lay back in our chairs and rested our feet, tired with many hours in the saddle, against the projecting foot-rest which ran round the red-hot stove.

"I'm very sorry it has come to this," said Brown, after a few moments; warmth, rest and the whiskey having somewhat subdued even the austerity of a deputy-sheriff. "You really hadn't ought to have done it, Mr. Pierre."

The man he addressed as Pierre was still young, rather slight of build and dark in colouring. You could see at a glance that he was of a nervous temperament, and in the lamp-light his eyes shone with a strange effect that might be termed a glare, somewhat like those of a hunted animal at bay in a dark thicket. From the womanish way in which he sipped his whiskey, it was evident that he could have done very little drinking in his life. Whatever was the cause of his crime, rum was not. It must have been more the alcohol than the heat of the stove which brought some colour back into his cheeks. He shook his head mournfully at Brown's words, but life was not so gloomy as it seemed a few minutes before.

"Well, how did you come to do it?" burst out Clark, whom curiosity, as well as disgust at the invasion of his rights of hospitality and asylum, rendered fidgety and talkative.

Still Pierre would do nothing but shake his head and sigh. In view of having to stand a trial it was not to be wondered at that he would not commit himself. But I knew that perhaps he might never come to trial at all.

"You don't look like a man who would strike a woman," said I.

The prisoner started and gave me a quick full look of gratitude. He could be silent no longer.

"I swear to heaven," said he, "that I never laid hand on that woman before. Much as I have been provoked,—or—here he hesitated—"irritated—I never struck her. What happened last night was the affair of a moment. The first thing I knew, I was riding out of the village and feeling that I had stabbed somebody."

"And then somebody's horse," added Brown, dryly, the first flush of the whiskey having expended its softening effects.

"Oh! I was going to send the mare back."

"Ah!" ejaculated Brown, with a satire quite lost upon the prisoner.

The ice being broken, and the whiskey having had its effect on his tongue, he now leaned back in his chair and spoke as follows:

"I might as well tell you, gentlemen, how it all came about—at least, as far as I am able, because there are points in my experience I can't pretend to account for. The woman I hurt so badly the other night is my lawful wife; I never cared for any one else but her, and when I married her, I doubt if there was a happier bridegroom in the land. Happy isn't the word; I was mad with joy and I acted in such a way that everybody was making fun of me. I saw them well enough. They thought I was blind to their ridicule, but I took it all in. Only my delight at getting Lou—that is the name of my wife—was so great that I didn't care a straw for ridicule or anything else. Well, I had had hard enough work to get her, that's a fact, and my marriage was the triumph of three years of as great misery as I can think of. This business is bad enough, but I would rather swing than pass such a time as I did then."

"You may suppose from my saying that I had hard work to get her, that the match was uneven, or that there was something against me, or that Lou didn't like me. Not one of these things is true. I was making a little money, had a reputation for perfect steadiness, never drank, belonged to a church and taught in Sunday-school. Lou hadn't a cent, never doubted my character for squareness, and took a liking to me from the first. In fact I was always bashful and never had taken to girls, while Lou had got quite a name for being a belle when I began to follow around after her. Folks actually thought better of her for having me attentive to her. That is only to show you that there was nothing against me in any way, shape or manner. Well, that was the beginning of it all. I was so well received that I was certain all was right, and I suppose that turned my head a little. I just let up brakes all around, and if I didn't just love that girl! There wasn't anything I wouldn't do for her. Well, she didn't quite understand it all. I sometimes think women don't know what love is; at least they don't love the way we men do. They are cool, and seem to be able to think of something far ahead when the man is half out of his mind with the pleasure right there. Pretty soon she began to fight off and dictate terms. That was all right enough; I submitted, and would have stood almost anything. But next thing that happened she broke the engagement. Then I went to see her and we had a fine row. She told me she didn't care a button for me, and I must keep my distance, and all that sort of trash. Well, I saw pretty soon that she didn't care for anybody else, and did care for me; and so after a blow-out the matter was patched up and we were thick again as ever. After this she was more loving, but pretty soon the same thing occurred again. This time I was furious and stayed away. Well, she

stood that about two weeks and then dropped. I was about dead by that time, but I had determined not to make the advances, and so she had to. Well, gentlemen, I'm making too long a story. That is the way she acted a great many times. To say I loved her all through would not be true. On the contrary there were times when I hated her so that I lay awake at night just to think over what could hurt her most. Why, I have had long plans mapped out to humiliate and shame her, and it was only by keeping my memory jogged every now and then, recalling that a man has no business with such dirty, small work that I saved myself from putting them into execution. There was one thing I noticed however. When I was near her I couldn't be half so vindictive as when we were apart. Out of sight I could ponder over the most ingenious plans for her ruin and harm, but when she was by there was something in her eyes or the turn of her head that made a baby of me at once. It was that—whatever it may be—which prevented any such move on my part and brought us together at last before a clergyman in church."

Pierre had become absorbed in his remarks and now reached automatically for his glass, which Clark had filled again with whiskey and water. It seemed to do him good to talk, and all the rest of us were so much interested that we not only said no words, but forbore to look at him, lest something might interrupt the flow of his confessions. Weariness, warmth, the liquor, and, somewhere in the air, the feeling of a tragedy, combined to throw such a spell as most easily turns a man to loosening his inmost secrets from the cells where he has meant to keep them forever. The tallow candle burned dim and the stove took on the dull red glare of forged iron. It made no difference that the room and its contents were bare and vulgar, or that the men who sat about the cheap, ugly fire-place were rough in exterior and of minds different one from another; a common interest was occupying them. It was one of those occasions when everything conspires to knit individuals into a composite group, animated by one life. So strong was this feeling of fellowship that the prisoner evidently found it difficult to remember that his position was a dangerous one, or that three of the five men within the four walls were at least his jailers and possibly even worse.

"So we got married after all," continued Pierre, only stopping long enough to address himself to his tumbler, and never taking his eyes off the dark top of the white-and-red-bodied stove, at which we all were staring. "I suppose you are married men, gentlemen?" he said, and for the first time looked up quickly. Brown nodded gravely and assumed an answer for the rest of us; and the speaker was too busy with his recollections to consider whether Brown had a right to act for any of the others. "Well, then, you know what it is to be married, speaking in a general way, and what a very different thing marriage is to the idea most young men form of it. I won't deny it, I am cursed with a bad temper, and every now and then it masters me. I had consoled myself all along with the reflection that when once the ceremony was performed everything would be well, at least as far as my troubles of courtship were concerned. I soon found, however, that very much the same thing was to be my lot even after all I had gone through with. You are married: you know what an awful hold a wife has over a man, especially if he is perfectly steady, loves her to distraction, and never looks at any other woman. Well, that was the kind of a man I was, and having found it out pretty thoroughly, Lou began a systematic course of tyranny. So far from having left behind me the anger that used to overcome me before marriage, on the contrary I often found myself hating her worse as my wife than formerly as my intended. You will understand me. I had learned to require her presence as an absolute daily necessity. Once I had merely looked forward to a union with her as the great delight of the future. She was master of the situation, therefore, and dictated terms; for my love for her was so intense that I could not bring myself to play the bully, and would do anything rather than look at another woman. It seemed to me an insult to love to dispute her commands. If she was unreasonable and demanded wrong and silly things, if caprices bent her this way and that and made us both uncomfortable, there seemed to be only these two alternatives: either to convince her and get her to yield peaceably, or else to give way myself."

"It is needless to say that the latter was almost always the result. Many is the time she has gone to sleep in separate rooms, she all coolness and scorn, and I with the vilest hatred bursting in my heart. Why I have not killed her long ago I do not know. She was so sure of me, and so unconcerned that I should take advantage of the greater strength some day to subdue her, or do her bodily injury, that it afforded her an additional pleasure to brave the rage she saw was consuming me. Sometimes, when I was at the worst, I have said to her: 'Have a care! There is a limit to all things,' and she would answer with a burst of derisive laughter. Ah, that she had taken a little notice of her danger!"

Pierre sunk his head between his hands and sighed. Perhaps the motion may have had to do with moisture in his eyes.

"Yes," he went on, "it did come, after all. Never mind what the last cause was, the final blow to my resolution. I am telling you now more than I have ever breathed to human being. There was no reptile on earth, no devil